2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AN50 Badaga AN50

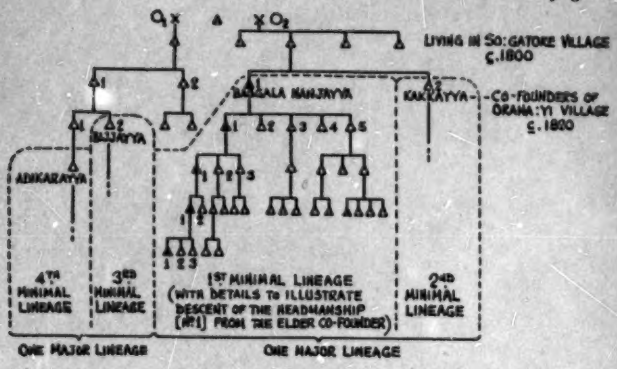

Diagram 6. O:ranayi village: A maximal lineage.

with someone outside the villager's own lineage, be it minimal, minor, major or maximal, his fellow members are usually willing to support him even though this means agreeing to false evidence. Such behaviour helps keep land and other valuables within the lineage and can also uphold the good name of a lineage and the village it inhabits. Solidarity is also expressed when a man wants to sell some land. He must offer it first to other members of his minimal or minor lineage, then to his major lineage, then to his maximal, then to any other inhabitants of his village, then to people in neighbouring villages. Only in the unusual case when nobody in this sequence will buy may he offer the land to Badagas from elsewhere. The land surrounding each village is typically owned by families of that village only.

CLAN

Several maximal lineages make up the *clan* (in American terminology, the *sib*). Like the lineage the clan is exogamous; but it is rarely confined to a single village. A lineage embraces all the patrilateral descendants of a known common ancestor (Schusky, 1965, 77) whereas a clan, made up of two or more lineages, is a

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

and bees-wax. Other exports of the later nineteenth century were coffee, tea, potato, barley, resin, silk and hides.

AGRICULTURAL CHANGE OVER THE PAST CENTURY

Until 1863 the Badagas not only cultivated fields close to the villages but also practised shifting agriculture in the wooded areas. At that time the government abolished, at least formally, the system of swidden cultivation and thereby posed a serious threat to those Badaga farmers who had depended on it (for full details, see Grigg, 1880, 314–327). According to government experts swidden farming was wasteful of timber resources and led to soil erosion. More significantly, though, there was also an eagerness among British settlers to cover vast tracts of the Nilgiris with tea and coffee plantations. In 1863 the British abolished the revenue system current in the Kundena:du area,[7] which had involved issuing a licence for each hoe and each plough without otherwise taxing or delimiting the land a man could cultivate or recording what acreage he was entitled to use. Until these restrictions came into effect many Badaga farmers made periodic use of lands five to ten times as extensive as their revenue assessments justified.[8] By about 1880 these restrictions, legislated during 1862–1864, had become realities in all parts of the Nilgiris.

The rapidly increasing Badaga population was now faced with a depleted acreage of usable farmland, a situation that worsened with erosion and land sales. For the first time in history their fields, once surveyed and registered in accordance with the Land Settlement rules, came to have a monetary value—especially as under the Waste Land Rules a man's land could be auctioned and thus irretrievably lost if he became too much in arrears with the payment of land revenue. A farmer therefore tried to hold on to as much registered land as he could.[9]

The British land legislation did not cause an immediate shortage of land among the Badagas. On the contrary, Grigg notes (1880, 480) that in the 1870s land was so 'cheap' that the Badagas who did own some or bought more tried to cultivate areas that were too large for their resources, with the result that their labour and capital were spread too thinly across the land to produce adequate returns. The slim yield of soil not properly fertilized and skimpy cultivation of too large an area impelled the poorer farmers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to sell land to British

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

177 planters or to engage in new occupations so as to earn enough cash
• 423 to maintain themselves and pay the revenue assessments on their land (Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 64; Grigg, 1880, 325, 471, 480; Ranga, 1934, 11–14). Those made landless by the restrictions on [464] forest swidden cultivation and also the labour surplus of the immigrant and rapidly expanding population were obliged to work in the plantations for wages, which were primarily used for buying grain in the markets. By 1870 Badaga men were getting contracts as construction gangs, a few women were picking tea or coffee-beans and young boys could be seen breaking stones by the roadside.[10]

241 Early in this century most Badaga families still owned and cultivated land within two kilometres of their homes. This land
311 was usually hilly and always unirrigated. There was relatively little terracing on the hill-slopes (Grigg, 1880, 470), and most tilling [423] was still done with ploughs and oxen.[11] The best fields lay in the valley flats, not so much because of the proximity of stream water [492] as because of the rich deposit of topsoil. Badagas had long [407] recognized the differences in soils and terrain, both when choosing where to plant crops and when dividing up the patrimony. Soil distinctions were important to them, but distance from the home [423] was even more significant. Land was therefore categorized by Badagas primarily as home-farm (within a half kilometre), outfield, or jungle clearings.[2] The first type got much of the cattle manure and all human refuse; more distant land received little manure and was often left fallow (Grigg, 1880, 319–320, quoting from a Revenue Board Report probably of 1863); jungle clearings were never manured and could lie fallow for several years. Weeding, like manuring, was mostly confined to the more valuable crops growing near the home.

311 A majority of the cultivable land on the plateau has always belonged to the Badagas; in the mid-nineteenth century this [423] amounted to 12,750 hectares, of which some 6,900 ha. were cultivated each year; but thirty years later 'the occupied area of the plateau has trebled itself... mainly due to the extension of cultivation by the Badaga villagers'. During the twentieth century virtually all of the land under subsistence crops (barley, millets and wheat) as well as plateau land growing market [177] vegetables and fruits was farmed by Badagas and Kotas. On the other hand a majority of the land devoted to tea, coffee and 127 cinchona was in British-owned plantations. Few reliable figures

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AM50 Badaga AM50

127 are available for the total area under crop by Badagas.[14] In the case of the administrative 'village' of Sholur nevertheless good data (McIver & Stokes, 1883; Benson, 1884; Arputhanathan, 1953, 43; Subrahmanyam, 1962, 3–4) allow a realistic comparison with (128) the recent situation (see Table 1). This 'village' (actually a commune) may be considered typical of Badaga settlements and has hardly changed its official boundaries since the Land Settlement of 1884.[15]

161
162

Table 1. *Sholur (So:lu:ru) 'Village': eighty years of agricultural change*

178 Total 'village' area, 1884	9113 hectares
●423 Total 'village' area, 1961	9111 ha.
311 Registered *patta* lands, 1884	913 ha., all held by Badagas
Registered *patta* lands, 1962	1619 ha., nearly all held by Badagas
Number of *pattas*, 1884	49 single registrations, 63 joint ones (i.e., total of 112 *pattas)*
Number of *pattas*, 1962	372 in total
Population, 1881	1772, all communities, in 384 houses
Population, 1961	8518, all communities, in 930 houses
Estimate of cropped area, 1880–1881	749 ha.
Estimate of cropped area, 1962	607 ha.

From Table 1 evidence of several important shifts emerges:

A. In eighty years the population increased fivefold.

B. In eighty years the size of households doubled, from an average of 4.61 to an average of 9.15.[16]

C. In eighty years the number of registered land holdings *(pattas)* more than tripled.

D. In eighty years the area of *patta* land doubled through release of government-held reserves (but was not all cropped).

E. Fragmentation of holdings has thus been taking place.

F. The estimate of the total cultivated area in 1962 was a little below that for 1880–1881.

G. Average cultivated area has thus dropped from 0.42 ha. per capita in 1881 to 0.07 ha. per capita around 1961; in other words, only one-sixth as much cropped land is being used as there was in 1881 for each person.

178 We may conclude from the recent situation at Sholur (So:lu:ru)
433

increasingly valuable to the Badagas because of rising grain prices (Mandelbaum, 1955, 240).

For many Badagas with small land-holdings the transitional period between the two World Wars was marked by the frustrations of indebtedness. Pieces of their land were sometimes sold to non-Badagas in order to pay off outstanding debts—a previously inconceivable practice. Some men went as far as the Annamalai Hills for manual labouring. Badaga debtors did, however, work hard to produce profitable cash crops or at least to buy back some of their former lands (Thurston, 1909, vol. 1, 64; Ranga, 1934, 4; Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, 249).

With the First World War, major changes in their marketing practices became apparent. Tea, coffee and cinchona, like potato, presuppose a market beyond the Nilgiris, which in turn presupposes adequate transportation. The crucial demand for vegetables to feed the numerous European troops in India, Burma, Malaya and Ceylon stimulated the change in crops documented above (see Tab[illegible]2). Similar conditions arose again in the Second World War and [illegible]mpted many more Badagas to try commercial farming. On each occasion cultivators took the risk of exporting potatoes and other vegetables to new and remote markets, and some made handsome profits (Francis, 1908, 167). The risks in this enterprise were real, for men could recall occasions when floods broke the road or rail connections or the goods reached their destination only after market prices had fallen heavily. The rewards of potato cultivation were, however, of critical importance in lifting the yoke of indebtedness: during World War II the British made a great deal of capital available to Badaga farmers, as part of the 'Grow More Food' campaign. This finance and the profits from selling their highly priced potatoes did more than any cooperative loan facility to relieve the indebtedness that Badagas had been suffering under for several decades.

While tea and coffee yield a higher profit per hectare than potatoes or grains, they are more susceptible to disease than the millets and require greater agricultural skill than all other Nilgiri crops if they are to attain the standards required by wholesale purchasing agents. Moreover they need to be produced in large enough quantity to warrant the processing and transportation to Bombay (since 1940, to Cochin). Middlemen, both Badagas and others, were therefore indispensable to the few Badaga tea and coffee growers of the 1920s and 1930s. Middlemen could act as a

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

1836; Metz, 1864, 6-7; Grigg, 1880, 456-458; Macleane, 1893, 403; Francis, 1908, 203, 441.

3. Metz, 1864, 8-9; an anna was 1/16 rupee, worth just under one U.S. cent today.

4. Grigg, 1880, 288, quoting from a report of December 1827; yet Harkness, 1832, 111, remarked that 'The poorer Burghers form the only class of labourers now to be procured on the hills . . .'

5. B.E.M.S., 1848, no. 18, 93; 1860, no. 20, 59; Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 64; Grigg, 1880, 510-511; Watt, 1889, 465; Francis, 1908, 171, 178; Tanna, 1970, 17, 37. Tea was first grown here experimentally in 1835 from Chinese seeds, and coffee in 1838; Macleane, 1893, 403.

6. Baikie, 1857, 38, 92; Markham, 1862, 367; Metz, 1864, 99, 152-154; Ouchterlony, 1848, 2, 5, 28; Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 71; Grigg, 1880, 465-467. The more important items in the list are identified botanically above, p. 146, n. 7.

7. Transferred back to Coimbatore District from Malabar in 1860; Grigg, 1880, 309, 322-323; Macleane, 1893, 216; Thurston, 1909, vol. I, 78-79.

8. Grigg, 1880, 316, 321. On the shortcomings of their agriculture in this period, see Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 31-36; Grigg, 1880, 480; 'Geofry', 1881, 132-135.

9. Grigg, 1880, 325. The Settlement of land holdings took place in 1864-1884; Grigg, 1880, 321-323.

10. B.E.M.S., 1858, no. 18, 93; 1860, no. 20, 59; McPherson, 1870, 15, 18, 21; Grigg, 1880, 34, 219-220. Tea-pickers were usually lowland labourers, for Badaga women were then afraid of being near jungle even when in gangs.

11. A few ploughs are still in use near the Si:gu:ru Pass; other villages preserve old ploughs to venerate at an annual ceremony; but in general ploughs went out of use fifty years ago; Ranga, 1934, 8.

12. Francis, 1908, 165-166; Ranga, 1934, 11-14. The lands are called respectively *ha:jihola, ka:duhola* and *so:lahola;* see Plate I.

13. Grigg, 1880, 13, citing Ouchterlony, 1848, 14; Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 14. It may be illuminating to cite an example of one administrative 'village'—Ke:ti Village—which reflects how much of the plateau land was formerly owned by Badagas. The available figures come from the 1881 land settlement records and show how 3235 hectares of this particular 'village' (actually a grouping of nearly two dozen villages) were distributed in the last years before the widespread adoption there of a cash economy:

Badaga farming lands	2,083 ha.
Badaga grazing ground	204 ha.
Toda grazing lands	51 ha.
Village sites (mainly Badaga)	90 ha.
Government forest areas	123 ha.
Anglo-Indian orphanage and school	307 ha.
Plantations (mainly British-owned)	175 ha.
Government cinchona plantation	2 ha.
Available for sale	200 ha.

(Source: Benson, 1881, 188-189)

From these data it is clear that this area, by no means an atypical one, was farmed largely by Badagas. (The 200 h.a. 'for sale' is somewhat misleading; it

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

127 latter part of the last century (Basel Mission, 1905, *passim*) leaves no doubt of a deep disturbance among Badagas during this period. Three distinct factors were responsible:

Land Legislation

656 The censuses for the last few decades of the nineteenth century record a steady increase in the Nilgiri population (both Badaga and other), implying a need for more farm-land. The British administrators responded, however, with several legislative moves (241) to conserve land resources. They stopped the traditional Badaga practice of swidden farming, in which men cleared as much forest-land as they needed and farmed it for a few years before moving elsewhere. (To the British this practice was wasteful of land, and they believed it led to soil erosion.) As an additional check on the wasteful use of large tracts they compiled an exhaustive register of all land holdings in the district, the Final Land Settlement (1881–1884), and made this the basis for annual (423) assessment of land revenues. Land holdings were restricted to a maximum of five hundred acres (202 ha.). Even the custom of cutting timber in nearby jungles was prohibited by the Madras (182) Forest Act (1882). In the years 1863–1882 legislation thus changed the whole complexion of the Badaga farm economy and prompted doubts in many Badagas about the very survival of their community and culture. The situation was aggravated over this period by the continuing extension of eucalyptus, cinchona, tea and coffee plantations.

Missionary Activity

177 The sense of uncertainty was further aggravated by missionary attempts to convert Badagas to Christianity. This went on for many decades, and the extent of Badaga opposition to it was in a sense defined in 1856, when they burnt down the mission's rest-house at Kallatti (B.E.M.S., 1856, no. 16, 27, note). At about the same time the Revd. Metz (1864, 137) noted that 'some parties were so hostile to me that they intended bribing a Kurumba to kill me by sorcery . . . In one place the Badagas created a disturbance, and refused me admittance into their village . . .'. In 1858 the first

241 cription. Jungle clearings often lay fallow for several years. Weeding, like manuring, was also restricted for the most part to crops growing near the home.

(492) Prior to 1913 there was almost no terracing of the hill-slopes, and most of the tilling was done by plows drawn by pairs of oxen (Grigg 1880: 470). Coffee and tea were being grown extensively by the British at that time, but the chief Badaga crops were barley, samai and korali (the latter two being millets). No 178 311 figures are readily available for the total area of land under crop by Badagas in those days: it was reportedly little below the present amount. In the case of the administrative "village" of Sholur, nevertheless, some data are available and we can make a realistic comparison. This village is typical of Badaga settlements and has hardly changed its official boundaries since the land settlement of 1884:

Total village area, 1884:	22,520 acs.
Total village area, 1962:	22,942 acs.
(423) Registered patta lands, 1884:	2,257 acs., all held by Badagas
Estimate of patta lands, 1962:	4,000 acs., nearly all held by Badagas
Number of pattas, 1884:	49 single ones, 63 joint registrations (i.e. total of 112 pattas)
Number of pattas, 1962:	372 total
(161) Population, 1881:	1772 total
Population, 1951:	5278 total (more recent figures not available)
Estimate of crop acreage, 1880-81:	1850 acs.
Estimate of crop acreage, 1962:	1500 acs.

(Sources -- McIver & Stokes 1883; Benson 1884; Arputhanathan 1953: 43; Subrahmanyam 1962: 3-4.)

178 From this comparison evidence of several important changes emerges:

(161) a) in 70 years the population has tripled;

(423) b) in 80 years the number of registered land holdings (pattas) has more than tripled;

(423) c) in 80 years the acreage of patta land has doubled (through release of

178 government-held reserves);

(423) d) fragmentation of holdings has thus been taking place;

(311) e) the estimate of total cultivated acreage in 1962 was slightly below that for 1880-81.

128 Some official figures can be presented, in addition to these, to illustrate the shift in importance of various crops in the entire plateau area. These figures come from two different sources (Francis 1908: 164, and Madras 1949: 976), and show the percentage of the total cultivated area devoted to each crop. The earlier figures apparently relate to the year 1905-06, and the later ones to 1940-41, 35 years later.

	COONOOR TALUK (Paranginad & Merkunad)		OOTACAMUND TALUK (Todanad & Kunda)	
178 241 311	1905-06	1940-41	1905-06	1940-41
Mainly Subsistence Crops:				
Wheat	1.7%	2.8%	2.9%	3.3%
Barley	5.4	2.7	3.4	4.2
Ragi	1.5	1.9	7.1	4.5
Samai	14.7	6.3	4.3	6.2
Other grains	13.1	0.7	27.8	1.1
Pulses	---	1.9	---	0.5
Cash Crops:				
Vegetables (mainly potato) and fruits	5.2% (potato: 4.8%)	18.6%	3.9% (potato: 3.2%)	30.3%
Spices, condiments	0.3	0.7	0.9	1.1
Coffee	44.6	25.6	18.1	15.8
Tea	7.7	42.7	12.8	32.3
Cinchona	1.1	0.08	10.9	4.0
Miscellaneous "industrial" plants	4.7	5.9	7.9	6.6

128 241 It may be objected that while the figures for each taluk in 1905-06 total 100%, those for 1940-41 total somewhat more than 100%. This discrepancy reflects one important change in the 35-year period: double-cropping became a fairly com-

128 241 mon practice. Thus two crops represented above by separate figures would sometimes be growing simultaneously on the same piece of land. (All percentages are based on acreage.)

128 178 241 311 Our main problem in interpreting these figures arises from the fact that we cannot be certain how much of the land under these crops was in fact owned by Badagas. A majority of the cultivable land in these areas has always belonged to the Badagas; just how much, has not been calculated. Even so, we can be certain that virtually all of the land under subsistence crops during this century was farmed by Badagas; this was also true of land growing market vegetables and fruits. A majority of the land devoted to tea, coffee and cinchona, on the other hand, was in British-owned plantations. Coffee turned out not to be too successful a crop in many parts of the plateau, and so the land was later given over to tea. This fact, together with the appearance of Badaga tea plantations from about 1925 onward, accounts for the great increase in tea acreage over the 35-year period (Ranga 1934: 18-22).

311 ●423 It might be illuminating at this point to cite an example of one administrative "village" in Merkunad -- Ketti Village -- which reflects how much of the plateau land was owned by Badagas. The figures that are available come from the 1881 Land Settlement records, and show how the 7993 acres of this particular "village" were distributed in the years prior to the Badagas' adoption of a cash economy:

Badaga farming lands	5157 acs.
Badaga grazing ground	496 acs.
Toda grazing lands	128 acs.
Village sites	222 acs.
Government forest areas	296 acs.
An Anglo-Indian orphanage and school	762 acs.
Estates (mainly British-owned)	440 acs.
Government cinchona plantation	5 acs.
Available for sale	487 acs.

(Source -- Benson 1881: 188-89.)

311 From these figures it is clear that this plateau area, by no means an atypical one,
• 423 was farmed largely by Badagas. (The 487 acs. of land "for sale" is somewhat misleading: this was mostly on steep rocky slopes ill-suited to any cultivation.)

Let us now return to the figures on crop acreage (p. 96).

178 What were the most important changes in the crop-pattern between 1905
241 and 1940, the two years for which data are available? Wheat, barley, ragi and spices changed very little in importance. A small acreage of pulses appeared in the later figures only. Cinchona lost some of its importance, but this was mainly on British-owned plantations. Miscellaneous "industrial" plants, primarily eucalyptus, maintained a stable acreage. The very slight fluctuations in all of these figures tell us very little. But other fluctuations are much greater, and much more illuminating. Samai, horali and some other millets lost much of their significance in the eyes of the Badagas, although these crops had previously been among the traditional staples. The land was planted with potatoes instead, especially after the start of the 1914-1918 War. In the 35-year period examined potatoes, together with some other quite minor vegetables, increased their acreage some five- or six-fold. Badagas do not eat much potato; clearly they sacrificed most of the acreage traditionally devoted to staple grains in order to grow marketable vegetables (Ranga 1934: 68). By the Second World War only 3% of the entire Nilgiri population subsisted mainly on millets; the other 97% depended on rice (Krishnaswami 1947: 464).

Some major changes also occurred over this period in the plantations; but these changes affected Badagas less. The importance of cinchona decreased as malaria became less of a problem and cures other than quinine appeared in India. Coffee, while still a major crop in 1940-41, had not been too successful and so lost some of its former eminence; but tea, conversely, had increased in importance

691 692 the other hand there are two factors which militate against the loser going to a magistrate with his case: one is the cost of a solicitor and of bribing various petty officials; the other is the common knowledge that the previous decision of the village council can be brought forward as evidence in court, whereupon in something like "90% of cases" (in the estimate of one experienced informant) the magistrate will simply hand down exactly the same decision as the village council's.

An alternative route for appeal against a decision is the hierarchy of traditional councils. Although this is normally less expensive, it is being followed less often now than before the Second World War. As disenchanted litigants use the magistrate's court more and more frequently, the power of enforcing its decisions that rested with the traditional hierarchy of councils is proportionately sapped.

Badaga litigants, we have suggested, find themselves in what can be called an "ambi-legal" situation. A case taken from my field-notes may help illustrate how the individual may nowadays manage to manipulate the two judicial systems so as to disadvantage an opponent. (This case remains unsettled; all names are fictitious.)

159 685 691 (592) (423) "Two brothers, Kallan and Jogi, lived together with their wives and children as a joint family and, as was the custom, also held their land in joint ownership, but each farmed as much of it as he wanted to. In 1948 Kallan, the elder brother, died leaving his two young children and wife in the care of Jogi. One of these children was a daughter, who would leave the family at marriage and would not be entitled, under Badaga law, to any inheritance from her dead father. But Ranga, the dead man's son, would in time become a man and would then demand a half of the entire joint family's estate. Jogi knew this very well, for he could

177 533 are Tamil, not Badagu. Very many of the Badaga hamlets have built a bhajan house specifically for use during evenings of devotion. Such houses are owned by the hamlet in common and are considered as temples. Inside the bhajan house will be a number of lithographic prints of Kriśna and other gods, and perhaps an image. During the course of a devotional evening, puja will be done to the image or to some of the lithographs. Not everyone in a hamlet is interested in the bhajan form of worship, however; but its popularity is clearly increasing, for it has its strongest following among the village youths. Once a year small donations are offered for the support of the bhajan group by every household in the hamlet where it is performed. An increasing interest in bhajans has been noted elsewhere in South India (cf. Singer 1959: 148-49).

368 423 778 782 178 796 (431)

177 795 2) Lingayats, too, have developed their ties with the plains. Before this century they knew little about the Vīraśaiva religion in their Mysore home-land. Perhaps once a year a Lingayat guru would wander up into the Nilgiris from Nanjangud (so says Harkness 1832: 137); but whatever he might be able to teach about the Lingayat faith would have to be transmitted entirely by word of mouth. In the 20th Century, on the other hand, the Badaga Lingayats have become literate, and some of them read books on Lingayat philosophy quite avidly. Cheap transportation has also enabled them to make pilgrimages to some of the places that are sacred in Vīraśaiva belief, and to meet well-informed monks and Jangamas in the towns of Mysore State.

177 582 (578) One significant fruit of this increased contact has been the occurrence of a number of marriages, during the present century, between Badaga Lingayat men and Kanarese Lingayat girls; even a few of the conservative Wodeyas have taken this step. The move for marital links with Mysore has not been met with equanimity by

241 with mixed plants are also maintained, but these gardens may be miles
away from their owners' houses and on outer Nilgiri slopes. Because
423 land is divided equally among sons upon a father's death, extensive
428 land fragmentation has taken place. To prevent further fragmentation,
there is now a tendency for sons to share and jointly manage land.
311 Communal pastures are close enough to permit the keeping of livestock
361 in communities. Individually owned and communal plots covered with
245 acacia, eucalyptus, and temperate fruit trees now occur near Badaga
137 communities. Due to intensive or slowly continued tempera·· forest
318 clearance, only a few small remnant patches of natural fore main
on the slopes near many hamlets and villages.

The outstanding features of Badaga hamlets and villages are the
361 house-rows with compacted earth courtyards edged by low walls (Figure
351 17). House rows within a single community usually parallel each other
and are frequently aligned in an easterly-westerly direction, but on
361 flatter terrain they may surround a courtyard on two sides. Because
364 the Badagas consider it sinful to throw waste water toward the sun,
783 Lord Shiva's emblem, through alignment of houses in an easterly-west-
erly direction housewives may throw waste water through the back door
or over the front courtyard wall without throwing it toward the sun.
841 One dwelling within a community house-row is set apart as a confinement
place for menstruating women or women undergoing a postnatal pollution
368 period. In addition to dwellings, house-like temples are built into
243 house-rows. Grain is threshed and agricultural produce or firewood is
313 dried on the courtyards. These also serve as playgrounds for children,
857 as sites for performance of ceremonial rites, and as dance arenas
796
535

TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 231

6: Noble K-4,5 (1962-1963) 1989
(1800-1963)

AW50 Badaga AW50
Kota AW55
Kurumba AW56
Toda AW60
Madras Tribes AW63
Kasuva

361
423
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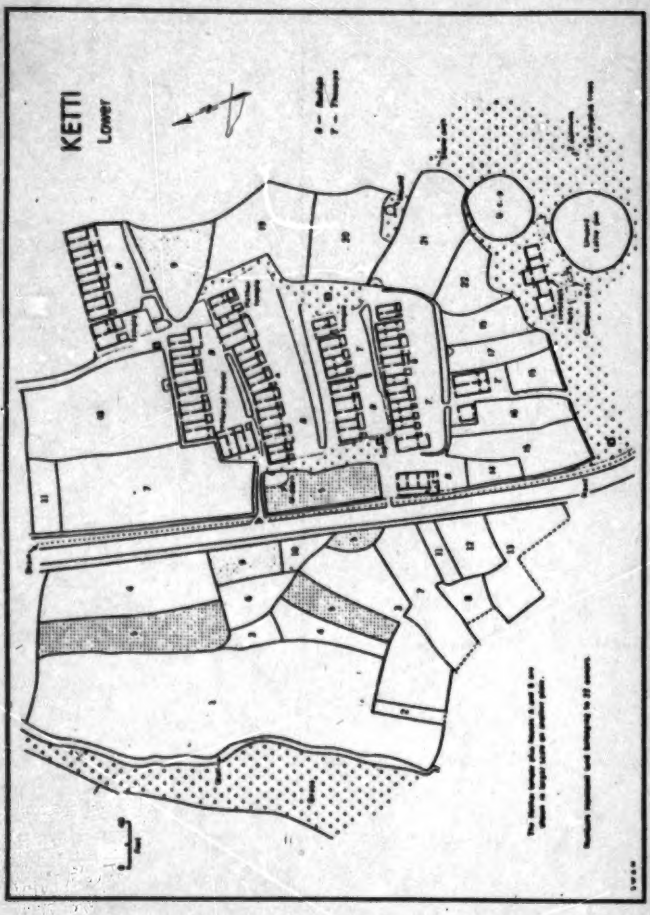

Figure 17. A portion of a Badaga village

241 651 were transferred from Malabar to the Nilgiri District in 1860. After a farmer paid a tax ranging from one to one rupee and eight annas per plow, or four to eight annas per hoe (erkadu kottukadu revenue system), he could cultivate as much land as he desired to in any chosen locality. Forest lands were not excluded. Consequently, cultivated plots were constantly being abandoned for new ones opened up or recleared. The two land revenue systems resulting in shifting agriculture were formally abolished in 1863, but in actual practice they lingered on until about 1884 (Francis 1908: 268-270).

651 In 1863 the English instituted a system of taxation whereby farmers were expected to pay taxes on all claimed lands, but inaccurate knowledge concerning claimed lands and actual agricultural practices led to continuance of old ways. As a result of the Final Land Settlement of 1881-84, all claimed lands were mapped and accurately recorded [423] for taxation purposes. Each individual was given a title (patta) to his land, but from thenceforth was expected to pay land revenue based on land extent and quality (Francis 1908: 274-278). During post-1884 311 years remnants of old practices remained. Although Badagas paid revenue according to the lands owned by them, an individual's scattered [651] plots away from a community might be cultivated periodically during the years, or left vacant for years until the owner decided to place more land under cultivation. Plots close to a community, especially those used for kitchen gardens, were usually cultivated at least once [178] a year (Ranga 1934: 13-16). Nowadays, however, 1) fertilizer applica- [291] tion, 2) cash obtained through potato sales, 3) the spreading desire to plant more tea, and 4) decreasing opportunities for individuals to

5. Adoption and Inheritance

Upon the death of a family head only his sons inherit his property. The farm-land and cattle are divided between them, or else maintained undivided as joint family property. But with regard to the house, the Badagas have the unusual institution of ultimogeniture: it is the youngest son who inherits the house and usually keeps his aging mother and unmarried sisters in it. New houses might have to be built for the elder brothers. The ultimogeniture makes good sense in a society where often a girl was married by the age of 12, and where consequently the oldest son of an elderly widow might be no more than 13 or 14 years her junior. Her youngest son is more likely to be a young man in the prime of life, more vigorous, with fewer dependents, and better able to provide for his old mother. By the time he has grown up, his elder brothers have commonly married, cleared fresh farmland, and built themselves new houses near this land (Rivers 1906: 560; Frazer 1918: 81).

Since the Badagas were until recently non-literate, and even now write wills only in rare cases, there has always been a series of rules to handle the transition of property from the dead to the living, whether lineal male descendants or adopted sons. Their substitute for a written will is the *sa:la jo:li*, a verbal statement made by the dying man. Each wish *(sa:la)* in it is normally followed by his relatives, but if any wish seems unfair they will immediately question him about it. Unfairness should here be construed as meaning an unequal division of property between the male heirs or too much generosity towards the wife and/or daughters. These people will try to reach a compromise with the dying man so that his wishes can later be followed without further argument.

There are no rules about particular kinds of property going to particular categories of relatives, with the one exception that when the head of the household dies, his main house goes to his youngest son. Even so, the *value* of that house has to be divided between all the sons, so that the youngest may well have to give something to his elder brothers. The rights of the youngest son in the house are absolute. It is true that he must be ready to shelter his widowed mother there; yet if he wants to he can sell the house without prior consultation. The funerals of his father and mother will be held there, under the superintendence of their *eldest* son. Yet if the eldest son wants to bring Kota musicians to perform at the funeral, and the youngest son prohibits this, his will must prevail since it is his house.

In 1969 I interviewed a sample of 301 Badaga males (aged 15 and above), and a further sample of 119 adult females. These people came from all parts of the Nilgiri District; and one of the questions asked concerned the number of houses that they "owned." In Table 1 it will be seen that 38% of the men did own houses, but only 19% owned more than one house. The percentages of women "owning" houses were at nearly all levels less than for

B: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1982 AN50 Badaga AN50

TABLE 1
Badaga House Ownership

	Adult males	Adult females
Owns no home, or shares part of one with other relatives	61.8%	72.3%
Owns 1 house	18.9%	13.4%
Owns 2 houses	6.6%	3.4%
Owns 3 houses	3.0%	
Owns 4 houses	2.7%	4.2%
Owns 5-9 houses		0.8%
Owns 10-29 houses	0.3%	0.8%
"Owns 30 or more houses"/d.k.	6.6%	5.0%
	(*N*=301)	(*N*=119)

the men, a fact that is explained by the presence of some uncared-for widows in the sample, and also some unmarried daughters who did not feel like saying they "owned" their fathers' houses.

If a well-to-do man has built a subsidiary house somewhere, that one can be inherited by his eldest son. Failing that, the family home which is inherited and thenceforth owned by the youngest son may still be partitioned between his brothers. They would then be expected to give some rent or property to him in return.

Property is impartible until the owner's death, and then land is to be divided equally between his male heirs. The agreement on partition of the land has to be written down and signed by the beneficiaries. Each gets a registration document *(patta)* from the state government, attested by the village accountant. For partition of other moveable property no documentation is called for: the beneficiaries simply agree to the division in the presence of the headman and some village council members. Occasionally a sick old man may choose to arrange the division amongst his sons while he is still alive.

If a man should happen to die when his wife is pregnant, his property will not be divided until after the delivery; and if a son is born, he too will become one of the inheritors. Thus a young widow will be watched by her husband's relatives for a month after her bereavement to see that she menstruates. They then declare that she is not pregnant, thereby ensuring that she does not afterwards try to pass off an illegitimate son as an heir